

The Aesthetic of Regionalism

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DURING a summer in New Mexico the philosophical regionalist, as he secretly described himself, made two acquisitions: a scene which he witnessed with his own eyes, and a story which he received on good enough authority.

The scene first. The eastbound train out of Albuquerque, climbing into the mountains, winds through dry and scrubby country which has a certain fascination for green visitors from the green regions and looks incapable of supporting human life. This visitor was going to pull down his window shade and try simply to keep cool, when he was surprised by the sight of human habitation after all, and on a rather large scale: a populous Indian pueblo. A second appeared presently, and then another. One displayed a very good church, but all were worth passing that particular day for this reason: it was threshing time. On the outskirts of each town were the threshing-floors, evidently of home-made concrete and belonging each to a family or unit of the tribal economy. On the floors Indians were beating out the grain; on some the work was nearly done, the grain had been separated from the chaff and lay in a golden pile. The threshers were old and young, of both sexes, and beautifully arrayed. They laughed, and must have felt pleased with their deities, because the harvest was a success, and bread was assured them for the winter.

So this was regionalism; flourishing on the meanest capital, surviving stubbornly, and brilliant. In the face of the efforts of the insidious white missions and the aggressive government schools to "enlighten" these Indian people, their culture persists, though for the most part it goes back to the Stone Age, and they live as they always have lived. It may be supposed that they find their way of living satisfactory, and are so far from minding it that they prefer it above others, receiving from it the two benefits which a culture can afford. First, the economic benefit; for they live where white men could scarcely live, they have sufficient means, and they are without that special insecurity which white men continually talk about, and which has to do with such mysterious things as the price of wheat; they thresh, bake, and eat their own grain and do not have to suffer if they cannot sell it. And second, a subtler but scarcely less important benefit in that their way of living is pleasant; it "feels" right, it has aesthetic quality. As a matter of fact the Indian life in that one animated scene appeared to the philosophical regionalist one to be envied by the pale-faces who rode with him in painful dignity on the steel train, reflecting upon private histories and futures, but neither remembering nor expecting anything so bright and charming as this.

And now the story. For several consecutive years an Indian tribe suffered from even drier seasons than usual and made insufficient crops. Their distress was such that a voice was raised for them in Congress and a sum of something like \$20,000 appropriated for their relief. An agent of the Government came out to make the presentation, and sought the chief. To his surprise

the chief did not jump for it; he was rather indifferent, but he agreed to call his counsellors together and deliberate. He reported later to the agent that the tribe would not accept the white man's money *because it would be bad for the young men*.

The interpretation which a philosophical regionalist might place upon this incident is not the one which would probably occur to the mere moralist or Puritan. It was not because the chief was too proud that he refused the white brother's favours, for he was too courteous not to accept them if they were well meant and if there was no harm in them. But the question was whether it was safe to entrust the young men with spending money, when they had never had much of it, if any, and did not live by money. What would they do with it? The chief knew that, while Indians compose in the mass a strong race, there are always weak-headed Indians, and these would want to take the money and buy white men's goods with it to import into the tribal life and corrupt it. The chief knew at least as much about this as did the philosophical regionalist, and the latter knew, having been instructed by his friends when he was going about making some small purchases of Indian things, that Indians are apt to set an inordinate value upon highly-coloured articles sold in the white ten-cent stores, which are less than trash when compared with the beautiful ornaments which Indian weavers, potters, and jewelers make; that Indian bucks fancy white men's shirts, which are unworthy of them; and that they are apt to part with anything in order to secure alarm-clocks. The chief must have looked with apprehension upon importations in general, knowing that a culture will

decline and fall when the people grow out of liking for their own native products, and he drew the line at alarm-clocks.

He surrendered an economic advantage which entailed an aesthetic disadvantage; probably possessing firmly the principle that the aesthetic values are as serious as the economic ones, and as governing. Thereupon the philosophical regionalist, seeking to justify the title, regaled himself with certain reflections.

"The Indian of the Southwest is a noble specimen." That is a persistent saying, and every white traveler comes away repeating it—but on what ground? Noble in his hard-headed pride perhaps; and surely every traveler has seen some Indian brave in his gorgeous costume standing on the busy corner of the white city, aloof and disdainful, his arms folded, as if determined to give a public demonstration of his toleration of the whites before they can demonstrate how they tolerate him. Noble with a more positive merit too, for Indians lead a life which has an ancient pattern, and has been perfected a long time, and is conscious of the weight of tradition behind it; compared with which the pattern of life of the white men in that region, parvenus as they are, seems improvised and lacking in dignity. And noble because the Indians make their life precisely what it is, in every particular, whereas life for the white men depends on what they can buy with their money, and they buy from everybody, including the Indian. The superiority of Indians, by which term the philosophical spectator refers to their obviously fuller enjoyment of life, lies in their regionalism.

Regionalism is as reasonable as non-regionalism, whatever the latter may be called: cosmopolitanism,

progressivism, industrialism, free trade, interregionalism, internationalism, eclecticism, liberal education, the federation of the world, or simple rootlessness; so far as the anti-regional philosophy is crystallized in such doctrines. Regionalism is really more reasonable, for it is more natural, and whatever is natural is persistent and must be rationalized.

The reasonableness of regionalism refers first to its economic, and second to its aesthetic.

A regional economy is good in the sense that it has always worked and never broken down. That is more than can be said for the modern, or the interregional and industrial economy. Regionalism is not exactly the prevalent economy today; it has no particular status in Adam Smith's approach to economic theory, which contemplates free trade, and which has proved very congenial to the vast expansions of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries; therefore regionalism suffers a disability. Yet just now, by reason of the crash of our non-regional economy, it tends to have its revival. Of the two economies, the regional is the realistic one. The industry is in sight of the natural resources of the region and of its population. The farmers support themselves and support their cities; and the city merchants and manufacturers have their eyes on a local market and are not ambitious to build up trade with the distant regions; perhaps it occurs to them that an interregional or world trade cannot be controlled. The quantity and quality of world trade which a given community carried on even as late as 1900 are probably changed beyond recognition now, for a great variety of reasons, of which some were predictable and others were not; but at any rate a community

can be badly hurt by the storm, if it chooses to fish in the ocean. Regionalism offers an economy as safe as it is modest.

Now it must be great fun to produce on a grand scale, so long as there is consumption for what you produce. The philosophical regionalist is quite disposed to grant that, and to concede the importance of the producer's having fun. But too much fun runs to mischief. It is agreed now that producers' fun must be curtailed, and producers regulated, as if they were irresponsible boys, unable to be trusted with their freedom, and with their grandiose concept of trade as something which will always love them and take care of their production. The interregional business men of the future will not look like joyous producers so much as communistic ants and wasps; and as between the economy of big business and interregionalism, with its privations, and the old regional economy in which producers had every reason to be realistic, and could be left to their own discretion, there is indeed some show of reason for the latter.

The aesthetic of regionalism is less abstract, and harder to argue. Preferably it is a thing to try, and to feel, and that is what it is actually for some Europeans, and for the Indians of our Southwest. They do not have to formulate the philosophy of regionalism. But unfortunately regionalism for white America is so little an experience that it is often obliged to be a theory.

Coming to the theory, the first thing to observe is that nature itself is intensely localized, or regional; and it is not difficult to imagine that the life people lead in one of the highly differentiated areas of the earth's surface is going to have its differences also.

Some persons, with a sociological bias, suppose that the local peculiarities of life and custom, for example in the Southern highlands, are due to the fact that the population is old and deeply inbred, and has developed a kind of set because it has been out of communication with the world. Other persons, who are economists, think at once of the natural resources of the region, and the sort of subsistence it affords to its population, and find there the key to the cultural pattern. Both must be right; regionalism is a compound effect with two causes. But the primary cause is the physical nature of the region. A region which is physically distinct supports an economic unit of society; but its population will have much more of "domestic" trade than of foreign, and it will develop special ways and be confirmed in them.

As the community slowly adapts its life to the geography of the region, a thing happens which is almost miraculous; being no necessity of the economic system, but a work of grace perhaps, a tribute to the goodness of the human heart, and an event of momentous consequence to what we call the genius of human "culture". As the economic patterns become perfected and easy, they cease to be merely economic and become gradually aesthetic. They were meant for efficiency, but they survive for enjoyment, and men who were only prosperous become also happy.

The first settlers in a region are occupied with its conquest, and driven by a pure economic motive. Human nature at this stage is chiefly biological, and raw; physical nature, being harried and torn up by violence, looks raw too. But physical nature is perfectly willing to yield to man's solicitations if they are

intelligent. Eventually the economic pattern becomes realistic, or nicely adapted to the bounty which nature is prepared in this region to bestow. It is as if man and nature had declared a truce and written a peace; and now nature not only yields up her routine concessions, but luxuriates and displays her charm; and men, secured in their economic tenure, delight in this charm and begin to represent it lovingly in their arts. More accurately, their economic actions become also their arts. It is the birth of natural piety: a transformation which may be ascribed to man's intuitive philosophy; by religious persons, such as Mary Austin, to the operation of transcendental spirit in nature, which is God. It is certainly the best gift that is bestowed upon the human species. The arts make their appearance in some ascending order, perhaps indicated like this: labour, craft, and business insist upon being transacted under patterns which permit the enjoyment of natural background; houses, tools, manufactured things do not seem good enough if they are only effective but must also be ornamental, which in a subtle sense means natural; and the fine arts arise, superficially pure or non-useful, yet faithful to the regional nature and to the economic and moral patterns to which the community is committed. It is in this stage that we delight to find a tribe of Navajos, or some provincial population hidden away in Europe.

For now the expert travelers come through, saying, Here is a region with a regionalism, and this is a characteristic bona fide manifestation of human genius. The region is now "made" in the vulgar sense (useless to a philosophical regionalist) that the curious and eclectic populations of far-away capitals will mark it

on their maps, collect its exhibits for their museums, and discuss it in their literary essays. But for the regionalists who live in the region it is made already, because they have taken it into themselves by assimilation.

The regionalists receive the benefit of regionalism, not the distant eclectics; it is they who have the piety, and for whom the objects and activities have their real or pious meaning. This piety is directed first towards the physical region, the nature who has always given them sustenance and now gives them the manifold of her sensibilia. It is also directed towards the historic community which has dwelt in this region all these generations and developed these patterns. It is their region and their community, and their double attachment might well seem too powerful, and too natural, and also too harmless, to excite the wrath of any reputed philosophers; or it may be the envy, if the philosophers are so abstract and intellectual that they have never sufficiently felt such attachments; yet, whatever the motive be, some philosophers do actually represent themselves as aggrieved by it.

Cookery is one of the activities which go by regions. A cookery owes its form partly to the climate and to the natural foods of the region, and partly to the cumulative experimentation of the generations of native cooks; perhaps in equal measure. So with architecture, furniture, the decorative motif of interiors; so with clothing; so with the social pastimes and pageants; so with speech and idiom; and so with literature and other fine arts. Sometimes the tradition seems more the consequence of the region than of the community, or vice versa; but both have played their part; the

region first, naturally, because it isolated the community. Critics of the arts, and of *objets d'art*, if they wish to be up to date, must now require themselves both to trace in them an adaptation to a special variety of physical nature, and also to find the patient historical development of local "schools" which produced them.

In contrast to the regional view that critics have learned to take of the arts, the broad or eclectic view now seems too fatuous. Eclectic minds are doubtless good for something, but they are very dangerous for the health of the arts. If their interest is in the arts they would be well advised not to carry their missionary zeal into the regions, for presently they will extinguish regionalism and have nothing to average up; then they will be without careers. And capital cities, which are the fortresses of eclecticism, should hardly be built and pushed on the assumption that they are to overrun and standardize all their regions. The city is a dangerous necessity in regional society. It is useful, and it is even creative in the way of aesthetic forms; for example, the architecture of capitols and landscaping of parks, the drama, and the other fine arts; in all of which it had better condescend to try to catch the genius of the hinterland. If it invites the patterns from too many regions, in an excess of hospitality, and tries to compose its arts out of perfectly average materials, its aesthetic life will become a mere formality and perish of cold, and then it will be left with a function which is strictly economic and gross. A capital of the world would be an intolerable city. And lesser cities, with more ambition than piety, which build grandly but upon indifferent and eclectic foun-

dations, are nearly as bad. Cities lately are being zoned and planned; but in the planning, if it is not too late, they should aim at the centre of the aesthetic effect, which is regionalism; at the most, nationalism.

But it takes a long time for regionalism to arrive. It is the work of many generations, of which the earliest ones must live and die in war with the region, exploiting it, trying to impose their own economic wishes upon it, not yet knowing the sort of peace that would be lasting. What chance have frontiersmen, backwoodsmen, "colonials", of attaining to the completeness of life? What they may look forward to principally, if they are lucky, is livelihood. They bring ways and means which suit their old region but not the new region. Or they take pains to bring nothing, and to be open-minded, in order to learn as rapidly as possible; which is not very rapidly. Wherever the settlement of the New World has been undertaken by Europeans, it might have been promised at once that the new region would hardly become the seat of a culture comparable to that of the parent European region within any period which was not commensurate with some centuries of European history.

This latter proposition seems to the philosophical regionalist binding; on second thought perhaps too binding. It is true that the immemorial Europeans, those with acute perceptions and even those with the best will in the world, have looked repeatedly with honest deprecation upon their brethren the new settlers in America, Australia, or Argentina, knowing without having to reason about it that a Europe could not be improvised in these remarkable regions even if it could be realized in time. By their look and their

tone, if nothing else, they have exhibited "a certain condescension in foreigners" and caused us much concern; we could not help resenting it, nor could they help feeling it. However rich they might believe American life to be materially, they could not yet believe it to be rich spiritually. Very largely they must have been right, and must still be right. Nor is it a great consolation to retort that what we lack in aesthetic attitude we make up in economic power, whereas the Europeans in more regions than one seem likely, for one reason or another, to be caught clinging to their attitudes when the economic structure tumbles down and pulls them with it, attitudes and all. If it is not becoming in Europeans to dislike us for our power, it is not becoming in us to wish economic evil upon them in order that their aesthetic superiority may be blotted out of our consciousness. Nevertheless, however that may be, it is just possible that we may have made or may be making a better and quicker job of regionalism than the Europeans allow for; than a dogmatic philosophical regionalist allows for. There may be a short cut.

What we have in this country, of course, is not so much a regionalism *de novo* as a transplanted regionalism, if that is possible. The Fathers of the Republic were not savages; or rather, since savages are likely to have a quite flourishing regionalism, they were not strictly business men. They were European regionalists, and they set about to apply to their new regions as much of their European regionalism as was applicable. New England they meant to be a Puritan England, Virginia an Elizabethan and royalist England. If they could not quite transfer their economic

techniques, in such matters as building, tilling the soil, travel, and politics, they were more successful in transferring a language and some of the technique of the fine arts; which is as if to say that they had to erect a new house but were able to crown it for the time being with an imported capital. The matter of classical education, for instance, is a foreign matter for modern Europe as well as for ourselves; yet to some extent it has proved negotiable. We can use Greek, if we know it, in forming our poetry and politics, and we certainly have used it in forming our public buildings and our statues. We can also use English, French, Italian, and German models; but not so easily since the rise in us of that proper state of mind attested by our declarations of independence, because we must regard these cultures as competing and correlative ones, not as our archetypes. Now it must be remembered that what is Greek to us was native and nameless to the Greeks themselves, and not the same thing at all; and it enters into our regionalism only as some undigested Egyptian influence may have entered early into theirs. It should be a comfort to us, however, that we scarcely know for certain of any regional culture anywhere that can be called, in strictness, "indigenous". A regional culture ordinarily represents an importation, or series of importations, that has been lived with and adapted for so long that finally it fits, and looks "native". It may be ages before we can assimilate all the foreign modes that now conglomerate in what we call our American culture, and only then will they be really ours. In the meantime they will serve. Some of the regionalism which we have not had time to acquire we can borrow.

By the year 1850 our continental acquisitions were completed, and the settlement of North America, by a stock whose language and inheritance were largely British, was proceeding irregularly westward, region by region, and perhaps working faster with each advance. The momentum behind the advance was great, and the formula of settlement, or at least the formula of open-mindedness, was familiar; these being the conditions, if any, under which such work may be speeded up. The destiny of this enormous area must have seemed to the philosophical regionalists of the period to be roughly definable: to be comfortably occupied by a population which was now distinct, and was distinguished as "American"; but to fall culturally, as it fell physically, into a great number of regions, to which the general pattern of Americanism was to make its adaptations; that is, to develop culturally according to the implications of the political scheme, which was that of sovereign States within a federal Union. Naturally the States east, which were older as compared with the States west, and particularly with those empty areas west whose States were not yet born, were more highly developed; their economies more stable, and their mode of life more aesthetic. New England had achieved a rather strong regionalism. The South had done about as well, or if anything better. The peculiar institution of slavery set this general area apart from the rest of the world, gave a spiritual continuity to its many regions, and strengthened them under the reinforcement of "sectionalism", which is regionalism on a somewhat extended scale. But what New England and the South had done the other sections would do; and they might do it more quickly, though no philo-

sophical sectionalist could be sure about that. The future was promising, though the futurist must look a long way ahead. The federal set-up for the development was admirable.

At about this time, however, the American varieties of regionalism, developing healthily, and at their uneven stages of development, came under a powerful destructive influence, and the philosophical historian of their subsequent course must bear witness that they have nearly been destroyed by it. This influence was not the dissension which resulted in the Civil War; that was destructive, but may now be regarded as one of the incidents in its march. It was nothing less than a whole new economy; it was industrialism, or the machine economy. It was European, and mainly English, in origin, and it was to have a baleful effect upon the charming regionalisms of Europe. But it was to be seized upon with almost mortal infatuation by the Americans; as if they were thinking that if they could not soon equal the Europeans at regionalism, they could distance them quickly at industrialism, and therefore they had better make a switch in their objectives. Only the South consistently opposed it, and may even now be said temperamentally to dislike it; yet the South was eventually to finger it too.

The machine economy, carried to the limit with the object of "maximum efficiency", is the enemy of regionalism. It always has been; not only at the present stage of affairs has the issue between them become really acute, and been raised specifically and publicly in many places; for example, in Southern communities, now agitated as to their proper alignment between the Southern "tradition" and the "new" indus-

trialism. The industrialism is not new, but the awakening of the Southern communities to its menace is new.

The machine economy was bad enough in coming to America, where the regionalisms were at many different periods of growth, but it came to the perfected cultures of Europe with the disruptive force of a barbarian conquest, turning the clock back, cancelling the gains of many mellowing centuries. (Such strong terms will apply of course to those regions which sooner or later allowed the machine economy to take charge of things.) It is no wonder that a good many pious European thinkers have been appalled by a sort of havoc which was much less visible on this side, and which the pious American thinkers, if any, have therefore been at much less pains to think about.

The new economy restored to the act of labour the tension from which it had delivered itself so hardly and so slowly. It returned the labouring population, and in some degree the whole business population, to a strictly economic status; a status with which the Europeans were fairly unfamiliar, and which their history recorded only putatively as the possible status of serfs, or the possible status of the original savages fighting for subsistence; and a status in all respects more ignominious than that of pioneers and frontiersmen in America. For under this economy the labourer is simply preoccupied with tending his abstract machine, and there is no opportunity for aesthetic attitudes. And not much material for them, either, since it is now more and more the machine which makes the contact with nature and not the man. But most of the machines are concerned with processing the materials taken out of the land, and they are housed in factories,

while the factories are housed in cities. Therefore the landed population tends to lose its virtue, and the population as a whole becomes more and more urbanized. Now a city of any sort removes men from direct contact with nature, and cannot quite constitute the staple or normal form of life for the citizens, so that city life is always something less than regional. But the cities of a machine age are peculiarly debased. They spring up almost overnight, a Detroit, an Akron, a Los Angeles. They are without a history, and they are without a region, since the population is imported from any sources whatever; and therefore they are without a character.

So painful a reversion must bear the promise of wonderful compensations, and it does. They define themselves in the new volume and multiplicity of the goods for consumption. But since the necessities of consumption were secured already in sufficient volume and multiplicity (sufficient in Europe, abundant in America) the additional volume and multiplicity must have reference to the luxuries; that is, to the hours of leisure and the pure aesthetic enjoyments. Here it must be said that, on the whole, the expectations of the moderns have been cheated. The products of machines may be used, but scarcely enjoyed, since they do not have much aesthetic character. Aesthetic character does not reside in an object's abstract design but in the sense of its natural and contingent materials, and the aesthetic attitude is piety.

The symbol of the aesthetic torpor and helplessness of the moderns lies in their money. There was never so much money in the world, never a time when goods and labours were so universally for sale; and

never so little affection lavished on the products of region, which is natural enough when they do not have their real or private value for us but only the value which is determined by the universal market. It is the intention of the machine economy to furnish everybody with money, and then with a free market in which all the goods of the world will be purchasable. The consequence is that persons with much money, who set the standards of taste, go out and buy with it the houses, furnitures, vases, educations, lectures and doctrines, foods and drinks, clothes and millineries, of all regions impartially; and people with less money do the same in their degree. To say that is simply to say that the age thinks it has discovered an aesthetic principle which is not regionalism.

The philosophical regionalist in conclusion is inclined to exhibit his good faith by professing his concrete or particular regionalism: an Upper South variety, less rich in many respects than the regionalism of Louisiana, which by virtue of its physical nature and its history is most distinct among the Deep South varieties. Traversing by car the east-and-west dimension of Tennessee, and the north-and-south or Delta dimension of Mississippi, he makes his way to Baton Rouge, startled equally by the distinctness and by the massimilatedness of the regions entered and crossed, finally marvelling at the power of that interregional but sympathetic symbol, the South. There is too much economic settlement yet to be done in this section to permit him to point with too much pride, and in fact it would appear that during some large part of the period from 1865 to the present day the settlers have taken a holiday. In the Mississippi Delta he is forced

to believe that the progress has been backward, as it has been in those unsouthern regions which have felt the extreme impact of the machine economy: what could be more like the homelessness of men in those regions than the life of this black population on this black land, resembling the life of a camp, forcing from nature an annual tribute of cotton and otherwise scarcely obtaining a single token of her usual favours? But in Louisiana it seems different.

The darkey is one of the bonds that make a South out of all the Southern regions. Another is the climate. The South is a place in which it is generally pleasant to be in the open air, and nature blooms and waxes prodigiously; one of the earth's areas most easily habitable by man, and perhaps, for the morale of the inhabitants, too easily. The large Negro population, the all-the-year farming—was it not inevitable that the South should develop a distinctly agrarian culture, whose farmers would dominate their cities, which could not be expected to be large? If the Southern cities are growing rapidly now it does not in the least reflect the intelligent consent of their hinterlands, which are the real South, but the coming of industrialism, which destroys the native tradition, and calls the traditionalists "reactionary". The South has had a noble tradition, as traditions go in these longitudes. But at the moment it is just coming out of being intimidated by the get-rich-quick element that has concentrated in its cities, and is only beginning to think about reviewing seriously its old tradition with the thought of a proper future.

The regionalism of Louisiana is most important for the South, in its still divided mind. The region is more

charming than others naturally, with its live-oaks hung with moss, its sub-tropical flora, its waters, its soft air; and culturally, in the respect of the finish of its old French features, and its domestic architecture, which is not surpassed in the world.

But regionalism has to fight for its life in Baton Rouge, all the same, just as elsewhere. This fact is written where the least philosophical of regionalists may read it: in the stones. First of all, in the new buildings of the State University.* The old buildings still stand, or at least the "Barracks" do, in the heart of the city; the others had to go, since the city needed their room, and the University, with four thousand students, needed still more room and larger buildings. The old buildings are simple, genuine, and moving; precisely the sort of thing that would make a European town famous among the tourists. When the much larger plant of the new University was constructed it seems probable that buildings on the order of the Barracks but on the new scale would not have been economical, nor successful; therefore the builders conceived a harmonious plan for the campus in a modified Spanish, and it suits the regional landscape, and is not altogether foreign to the regional history.

But the visiting regionalist in Baton Rouge cannot escape its most famous feature: the State Capitol. It is nearly 500 feet high, bold in design, sumptuous in detail and finish, perfect in appointments, costing doubtless more money than a State Capitol ever did before—and extremely disconcerting to the sense of regional proprieties. It denotes power and opulence,

* This paper, in substance, was presented as a speech to the Graduate Club of Louisiana State University at Baton Rouge.

and this is fitting for the architectural symbol of the State of Louisiana. But the manner of the expenditure of the millions of dollars that went into it was peculiarly unimaginative, like the manner in which money is inevitably spent by new men who have made their pile. The State of Louisiana took its bag and went shopping in the biggest market; it came back with New York artists, French and Italian marbles, African mahogany, Vesuvian lava for the paving. The local region appears inconspicuously in some bas-reliefs and statues, and in the alligators, pelicans, magnolias, sugar canes, and cat-tails worked in bronze in the gates and the door-panels. They are so ineffectual against the shameless eclecticism of the whole that the Louisiana State Capitol could almost as easily stand in Topeka or Harrisburg or Sacramento as in Baton Rouge.

The State Capitol is a magnificent indiscretion. But the philosophical regionalist does not therefore despair. For many reasons; and because it occurs to him that the ironic perpetuation of the old Barracks, which stand in strange juxtaposition at the base of the Capitol, may bring to many half-hearted regionalists the understanding that what is called progress is often destruction.